

LIVING ORTHODOXY



*SAINT MILDRED, ABBESS OF MINSTER-IN-THANEL:
LIFE & LITURGICAL SERVICE*

Also in this issue...

*The Power and Efficacy of Prayer
Sermon on the Transfiguration of the Lord
(St. Philaret of Moscow)
The Calendar Question (Fr. Basile Sakkas; 3rd installment)*

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ON THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD

That they might know that He had power over both life and death and dominion over those who were above and those beneath... He brought before them one who still lives (Elijah), and one who had died (Moses). And when they both appeared they were not silent, but spoke together with Him of His coming glory, which was to be fulfilled in Jerusalem: namely, of His Passion and Cross, and by means of them, of His Resurrection also.

— *St. Cyril of Alexandria* (†397AD)

The virgin of the Old Testament looks upon the virgin of the New: Elijah looks upon John. He who had ascended into heaven in a fiery chariot looks upon him who rested his head upon a Burning Breast. His mountain became a figure of the Church, and in Himself Jesus has united the two Testaments, which the Church receives, revealing to us that He is the Giver of both. The one received His divine secrets; the other has proclaimed the visible glory of His works.

— *St. Ephraim the Syrian* (†373AD)

He brought these men (Moses and Elijah) before them for this reason also. He wished them to imitate their courage of soul, and their steadfastness in leading their people; and so that they might be gentle as Moses, and possessed of the zeal of Elijah, and as devoted as both were. For one of them, on behalf of the Jewish people, had for two years suffered hunger, and the other had prayed to God: "Either forgive them this trespass, or strike me out of the book that Thou hast written."

— *St. John Chrysostom* (†407AD)

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**OUR VENERABLE MOTHER MILDRED,
ABBESS OF MINSTER-IN-THANET, WONDER-WORKER OF KENT
WHOSE MEMORY THE CHURCH COMMEMORATES ON THE 13TH OF JULY**

ST. MILDRED was the second daughter of Merewald, a prince of Mercia, and his wife St. Ermenburga or Domneva. Merewald was the son of the Man of Fire, the ferocious heathen Penda. St. Ermenburga was the sister of SS Ethelred and Ethelbrigh, murdered by their cousin Egbert and venerated as martyrs (17 Oct.), and of SS Ermenburga, Etheldreda, and Ermengytha. St. Milburga was abbess of Wenlock, St. Milgatha a nun at Canterbury.

When St. Ermenburga returned to Kent to arrange the foundation of the monastery at Minster-in-Thanet, which was built in expiation of the murder of her brothers Ethelred and Ethelbert, Mildred either accompanied her or followed soon after. She had early given proofs of a vocation to the religious state; and that she might be more perfectly instructed in its obligations, her pious mother sent her to the Abbey of Chelles, in France, whither other noble English ladies betook themselves at this time for the like purpose. At Chelles the young virgin had much to endure and, being still in the secular habit, was so persecuted with the addresses of a certain young nobleman (aided and abetted by the abbess, of whom he was a relative) that she was compelled to take flight. Till she could meet with an opportunity of re-crossing the sea, she found refuge at a place now called Millam, in French Flanders, where she is still venerated in a chapel dedicated to her memory.

Great was the joy of St. Mildred when at length she reached the shore of Kent, and warm the welcome she received from her holy mother. With great solemnity, and according to the prescribed rites, she was received into the community, consisting at that time of seventy virgins, on which

occasion St. Theodore was the celebrant. It would appear that before long St. Ermenburga resigned her charge into the hands of her blessed daughter, as in the year 694 St. Mildred attended a council held in Kent under the title of Abbess of Minster.

Of St. Mildred's religious life, we are told how great was her humility, how fervent her devotion in psalmody, how frequent her fasts. In the words of the earliest record of her life, it is said: "She was not, as nobly born men now are, filled with presumption, nor with worldly pride, nor malice, nor envy, nor opprobrious words; she was not calumnious nor a wrangler; she was not a deceiver in any of those things which seemed to her good. She was merciful to widows and orphans, and a comforter of all the poor and afflicted, and in all respects of easy temper and tranquil."

St. Mildred went to her eternal rest on the 13th of July [8th cent.], and was laid beside her mother, St. Ermenburga. After a few years, a new monastery and church, dedicated to SS Peter and Paul, were built by her successor, St. Edburga, and thither were translated the sacred relics. In the year 1030, a second translation took place, from Minster to St. Augustine's, at Canterbury, through the influence of King Canute. The new shrine of the saint became the resort of many pilgrims and the scene of many miracles.

In the course of time, but under what circumstances it is not known, the sacred relics were removed to Daventer in Holland, and there were greatly honored in the same shrine with those of St. Lebuin and St. Marcellinus, English missionaries; but a small convent of St. Mildred having recently been erected at Minster, a portion of this sacred treasure was most happily brought back to her ancient home on the 29th of May, 1882.

From Richard Stanton, *A Menology of England & Wales, or, Brief Memorials of the Ancient British & English Saints* (London: Burns & Oates, Ltd., 1892), pp. 332-333, with some additions from S. Baring-Gould, *Lives of the Saints* [Edinburgh: John Grant, 1914], vol. 7, pp. 317ff.

THE 13TH DAY OF THE MONTH OF JULY

COMMEMORATION OF OUR VENERABLE MOTHER MILDRED, ABBESS OF MINSTER-IN-TANET, WONDER-WORKER OF KENT

AT VESPERS

On "Lord, I have cried..." , these stichera, in Tone I: Spec. Mel.: "Joy of the ranks of heaven..." —

Meek and mild, and humble of mind, the venerable Mildred shone forth with the light of grace, having been reared in piety and love for Christ; wherefore she cleaved firmly to her Bridegroom as her refuge and salvation, and rejoiceth now in the mansions of heaven.

A beautiful blossom of piety, sprung forth from a holy branch, full of the sweet fragrance of grace divine, Mildred filleth the Church of Christ as with the savor of costly incense; wherefore, inhaling this wondrous scent, we are transported to the garden of paradise on high.

Offspring of the sainted Ermenburga, and sister of saints, full of love for her heavenly Bridegroom, the venerable Mildred shunned the attentions of all earthly suitors; and fleeing eagerly to the holy hierarch Theodore, she rejoiced to be clothed by him in the angelic habit.

Glory...: Idiomelon, in Tone IV —

When, enraged, thy royal kinsman had thy pious uncles slain, O Mildred, and to atone for his grievous crime enabled thy holy mother to establish a convent in Minster, then didst thou rejoice to accompany her, O venerable one, to assist in her sacred labors, laying a firm foundation for thine own monastic life; for therein thou didst flourish like a palm-tree in the splendid courts of thy Lord.

Now & ever...: Theotokion, or this stavrotheotokion, in the same tone: Spec. Mel.: "As one valiant among the martyrs..." —

Seeing Christ, Who loveth mankind, crucified, His side pierced by a spear, the all-pure one cried out, weeping: "What is this, O my Son? How have the thankless people rewarded Thee for the good things Thou hast done for them? And dost thou hasten to leave me childless, O most Beloved? I marvel at Thy voluntary crucifixion, O Compassionate One!"

Aposticha stichera; and, Glory...: Idiomelon, in Tone II —

Sent by thy holy mother to Chelles in the kingdom of the Franks, O all-honored Mildred, to be nurtured in the sacred monastic life, even there thou couldst not escape the importunities of earthly suitors, who were enamored of thy great beauty and moved to ambition by thy royal rank; but, faithful to Christ, thy Bridegroom, thou didst flee unto Flanders, where thou didst take ship to return to Kent, where thou wast tonsured a nun by the holy Theodore, succeeding thy mother as abbess in Minster. Glory to thy chastity, O venerable one! Glory to thy humility of mind! Glory to the healing power thou hast received from Christ thy Master!

Now & ever...: Theotokion, or this stavrotheotokion, in the same tone: Spec. Mel.: "When from the Tree..." —

Beholding Thee nailed to the Tree of the Cross, O Jesus, she who knew not wedlock said, weeping: "O my sweet Child, wherefore hast Thou left me alone who gave birth to Thee, O unapproachable Light of the all-unoriginate Father? Haste Thou, and glorify Thyself, that those who glorify Thy divine sufferings may receive divine glory!"

Troparion, in Tone IV —

Through constant prayer and frequent fasting, by ceaseless psalmody and great humility, the glorious Mildred forsook the allurements of her royal rank, trampling underfoot all worldly pride and presumption. Wherefore, let us imitate her virtues, that, free of all earthly attachments, we may join her at the wedding feast of Christ our Savior.

AT MATINS

At "God is the Lord..." , the troparion of the venerable one, twice; Glory..., Now & ever...: Theotokion

Canon of the saint, with 4 troparia, the acrostic whereof is "Pious Mildred abideth now in paradise", in Tone IV —

ODE I

Irmos: The people of Israel, having fled across the watery deep of the Red Sea with dryshod feet, beholding the mounted captains of the enemy drowned therein, sang with gladness: Let us chant unto our God, for He hath been glorified!

Perceiving the vast deep of my sins, wherein I am drowning, I cry out to my Lord and Redeemer: Through the prayers of the holy Mildred vouchsafe that with her I may sing of Thee: Let us chant unto our God, for He hath been glorified!

In the souls of the sainted Ermenburga's children and kinsmen, as in rich soil, the seeds of piety thrive; for the holy Mildred, with Milburga, Milgytha, Ethelred and Ethelbert, delighted to cry: Let us chant unto our God, for He hath been glorified!

Offering up tears for the vile murder of thy kinsmen, O Mildred, yet didst thou rejoice that they had joined the ranks of the martyrs on high; and now thou singest with them in heaven: Let us chant unto our God, for He hath been glorified!

Theotokion: Untouched was thy pure womb by any stain of carnal desire, O holy Virgin; wherefore the beginningless Word, in His love for mankind, deigned to dwell therein, that we all may cry: Let us chant unto our God, for He hath been glorified!

ODE III

Irmos: Holy art Thou, O Lord our God! Make steadfast our hearts, that we may cry to Thee without ceasing: There is none righteous save Thou, O Lord!

Sorrowful, the king paid recompense to Ermenburga, the sister of his victims, and she went with Mildred to Thanet, to found a convent wherein might be offered for him the constant prayer: There is none righteous save Thou, O Lord!

Mild of manner and easy of temperament, Mildred was a stranger to malice and envy, crying out without ceasing: There is none righteous save Thou, O Lord!

In thy pure mouth did no calumny or falsehood dwell, O saint, for God made thy heart steadfast in

Him; wherefore thou criest without ceasing: There is none righteous save Thou, O Lord!

Theotokion: Let all Christians lift up their voices in praise of our all-immaculate Mistress, the Mother of God; for among women there is none more blessed than she.

Sessional hymn, in Tone III: Spec. Mel.: "Awed by the beauty of thy virginity..." —

Neither a wrangler nor a deceiver wast thou, O kindly Mildred, but wast unfailingly merciful to widows and orphans, a true comfort to the poor and afflicted; wherefore thou standest before the throne of God, offering up divine supplications in behalf of our souls.

Glory..., Now and ever...: Theotokion —

O pure and unwedded Virgin Theotokos, thou only intercessor and protection of the faithful: from misfortunes, tribulations and evil circumstances deliver all who set their hope on thee; and by thine entreaties save thou our souls.

Stavrotheotokion —

The unblemished ewe-lamb, beholding the Lamb and Shepherd hanging dead upon the Tree, exclaimed, weeping and maternally crying: "How shall I endure Thy condescension and voluntary passion which surpasseth understanding, O my Son, mine all-good God?"

ODE IV

Irmos: Perceiving the inscrutable counsel of God — the Incarnation of Thee, the Most High, from the Virgin — the Prophet Habbakuk cried aloud: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Desiring that thou learn all the ways of devotion, O holy one, thy saintly mother sent thee to the convent at Chelles, where thou didst learn to chant: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Refuge didst thou seek in Millam of Flanders, O saint, spurning the attentions of noble suitors; for thy sole desire was to chant: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Ermenburga, mother and abbess, sent Mildred to Theodore of Canterbury, to be invested with the angelic habit, the better to chant: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Theotokion: Deified by the grace of God Who ineffably made His abode in thine all-holy womb, O Ever-virgin, thou movest us all to cry unto Him: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

ODE V

Irmos: Shine forth upon me the light of Thy precepts, O Lord, for my spirit riseth early unto Thee and hymneth Thee: for Thou art our God, and I flee to Thee, O King of peace.

Adorned with tranquillity of soul, O holy Mildred, thou wast illumined by the precepts of the Lord; wherefore, ever rising early, thou didst cry: "I flee to Thee, O King of peace!"

Be thou a guide for us to the straight and narrow path, O Mildred most rich, that, rising early, we may cry out to Christ: "We flee to Thee, O King of peace!"

In our poverty and affliction, amid sickness of soul and body, we cry out to Mildred our good mediatrix: Shine forth upon us the radiant precepts of the Lord!

Theotokion: Divine rays of grace dawn upon us as we rise early to praise thee. Yea, we flee to thee, O Queen of peace, for thou intercedest ever in behalf of us sinners.

ODE VI

Irmos: I have come unto the depths of the sea, and the tempest of my many sins hath engulfed me; but, as God, lead up my life from the abyss, O greatly Merciful One.

Engulfed are we by the tumults of our offenses, and our souls are sinking in the deep of our grievous sins. Rescue us from the abyss, O Mildred, by thine entreaties.

Tempest-tossed am I by the storm of my transgressions, and the billows of my sins overwhelm me. Save me, lest I perish, O venerable one; for thou art truly merciful.

Having slid into the slough of despondency, unable to escape the mire of our ungodly deeds, in our distress we beg the holy Mildred to lead up our life from the abyss.

Theotokion: Nourishing at thy breast Him Who sustaineth the whole universe, O Virgin

Mother, thou didst receive the grace to save sinners from the abyss, O merciful Maiden.

Kontakion, in Tone I —

The Isle of Thanet aboundeth with thy grace, O Mildred merciful and mild, for there thou didst tend well the lambs entrusted to thy care, feeding them upon the verdant grass of the virtues, and giving them to drink of the still waters of piety. Wherefore the radiance of thy holiness shineth forth from Minster, illumining all England, O venerable mother, and filling our souls with light divine.

Ikos: Minster-in-Thanet rejoiceth greatly, for the relics of its holy abbess, having been released like the dove of Noah, have returned thereto as a token of God's mercy and forgiveness. Wherefore, O ye who love the saints of the Church of Christ, let us hasten to Mildred's sacred reliquary and bow down before her precious remains, which emit the splendors of sublime effulgence, filling our souls with light divine.

ODE VII

Irmos: O Word Who art without beginning, only-begotten Son, Who didst exist in the beginning with the Father and the Spirit: Blessed and supremely exalted art Thou, O God of our fathers!

O handmaid of the beginningless Word, by the rigors of the ascetic life thou didst scale the heights of the virtues, saying: Blessed and supremely exalted art Thou, O God of our fathers!

With patience didst thou wait patiently, O venerable Mildred; wherefore God brought thee before His throne, where thou criest: Blessed and supremely exalted art Thou, O God of our fathers!

Imbued with the knowledge of God more than thy peers, O glorious one, thou wast welcomed by the bishops of Kent into their councils, where they availed themselves of thy great wisdom.

Theotokion: Nestorius the accursed belittled thy place in the divine economy, O Virgin Mother, and disdained to call "Theotokos" thee who gavest birth to the supremely exalted God of our fathers.

ODE VIII

Irmos: The cherubim and seraphim stand before Thee in flames of fire, O Lord, and all creation chanteth unto Thee a beauteous song: O ye people, hymn, bless and supremely exalt Christ, the one Creator, forever!

Praise do we offer to Mildred our venerable mother, who standeth with the cherubim before the Lord of all, crying unto us: O ye people, hymn, bless and supremely exalt Christ, the one Creator, forever!

Attaining the end of thine earthly life, O venerable mother, thou didst give thy pure soul into the hands of thy Creator, and dwellest now with the seraphim and all the angels, exalting Him supremely forever.

Remembering thy great maternal love, the nuns of Minster shed copious tears of lamentation as they interred thine honored body by the grave of thy saintly mother, committing it to everlasting rest.

Theotokion: All our hope do we set on thee, after God, O most glorious and all-pure Maiden, and with spiritual songs we hymn, bless and supremely exalt thee among all generations, as thou didst foretell in truth.

ODE IX

Irmos: The ineffable hidden mystery of God is revealed in thee, O all-pure Virgin; for God hath become incarnate of thee in His loving-kindness. Wherefore, we magnify thee as the Theotokos.

Devoutly did the saintly Edburga, thy successor, bear thy sacred remains into the new church she had built for the Convent of Minster, O holy one, to be the magnificent ornament thereof.

Impelled by his veneration for thee, O Mildred, Canute the King had thy holy relics transferred to Canterbury, where they shone forth with splendor like magnificent jewels in a royal crown.

Sacrilege and blasphemy destroyed England's shrines, according as our God hath inscrutably allowed; yet He hath spared Mildred's precious remains as a source of grace and healing.

Theotokion: Ever glorious art thou, O Mary Mother of Christ, for the ineffable mystery of God, hidden even from the angels, was revealed

in thee: His incarnation in His surpassing love for mankind.

Exapostilarion: Spec. Mel.: "Hearken, ye women..." —

Hearken, all ye Christian women, and give ear to the godly precepts of our venerable mother Mildred who, having filled her lamp with the oil of mercy and alms, hath now entered with gladness into the joy of Christ, her heavenly Bridegroom.

Theotokion —

Rejoice, thou boast of the faithful, confirmation of the venerable! Rejoice, glory of the righteous! Rejoice, thou light of those in darkness! Rejoice, most holy temple! Rejoice, paradise of God! Rejoice, loosing of the curse, O blessed Mary!

Aposticha stichera; and Glory...: Idiomelon, in Tone VI —

Come, ye faithful of these latter times, and though our love hath grown cold, let us warm our souls with the zeal of the venerable Mildred; for the fervor of grace is ever emitted by her sacred bones, thawing the frozen ground of our hearts, that the seed of faith which hath been sown therein may put forth the grain of the virtues, to please Christ, the Lord of the harvest.

Now & ever...: Theotokion, or this stavrotheotokion: Spec. Mel.: "On the third day..." —

Seeing Thee crucified, O Christ, she who gave thee birth cried out: "What is this strange mystery which I behold, O my Son? How is it that Thou diest, suspended upon the Tree in the flesh, O Bestower of Life?"

AT LITURGY

Prokimenon, in Tone IV —

Wondrous is God in His saints, the God of Israel.

Stichos: In congregations bless ye God, the Lord from the wellsprings of Israel.

EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS, §208 [GAL. 3:23-29]

Brethren: Before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterward be revealed. Wherefore the law was our

schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Alleluia, in Tone I —

Stichos: With patience I waited patiently for the Lord, and He was attentive unto me, and He hearkened unto my supplication.

Stichos: And He brought me up out of the pit of misery, and from the mire of clay.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW, §104 [25:1-13]

The Lord said this parable: "The kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, who took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. Those

who were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made: 'Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.' Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise: 'Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.' But the wise answered, saying: 'Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying: 'Lord, Lord, open to us.' But he answered and said: 'Verily I say unto you, I know you not.' Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."

Communion Verse —

In everlasting remembrance shall the righteous be; he shall not be afraid of evil tidings.

Service composed in English by the reader Isaac E. Lambertsen.
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They say that a certain elder dwelt by himself in silence, and that a son of the world (layman) used to minister unto him continually; and it happened that the son of that son of the world fell sick, and his father entreated the elder to go with him to his house and to pray over him, and when he had entreated him to do so often, the elder went forth and went with him. And the man went before him and entered the village, and he said to the people there, "Come forth to meet the monk." Now when the elder saw the people from afar off, and perceived that they had come forth to meet him carrying lanterns, straightway he stripped off his garments and dipped them in the river, and he began to wash them, being naked. And when the man who ministered unto him saw this, he was ashamed, and he entreated the people of the village, saying: "Get ye back, for the elder hath certainly gone mad!" Then he approached the elder, and said unto him, "Father, what is it that thou hast done? For all the people are saying that the elder hath a devil." And the elder said, "This is what I wished to hear."

from *The Paradise of the Fathers*

THE POWER AND EFFICACY OF PRAYER

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD

St. Philaret of Moscow

“And He went up into a mountain to pray. And as He prayed, the fashion of His countenance was altered, and His raiment was white and glistening. And, behold, there talked with Him two men, which were Moses and Elijah” (Luke 9:28-30).

How sublime a spectacle on Mount Tabor! A spectacle indeed worthy of being contemplated with rapture as the apostles contemplated it, and of being solemnly celebrated as we now celebrate it. It is not without meaning that those who witnessed the great revelations on Sinai and Horeb, not without purpose, that Moses and Elijah appear on Mount Tabor also. They shall see more here than they saw there. On Sinai and Horeb, the might and glory of God were revealed unto men, through the powers of visible nature; on Tabor, not only does divinity reveal itself to man, but humanity itself appears arrayed in divine glory. Moses “quaked” on Mount Sinai (Heb. 12:21); Elijah complained on Horeb (I Kings 19:14); whereas on Tabor, through the fear of the apostles there shines forth joy: “It is good for us to be here.”

Christians! your heart is no doubt ready to say of the witnesses of the glory of Mount Tabor: indeed it was good for them to be there. Happy were they that they could be there! What then, if we tell you that the way to the contemplation of the glory of Mount Tabor is not swallowed up in an abyss, is not walled up from us, nor overgrown with thorns, not forgotten, nor lost, but may still be indicated by those who know it, to those who seek for it. (It is not difficult to understand that we speak here of the spiritual way; for a carnal way cannot possibly lead us to spiritual visions and divine revelations.) Why does the Evangelist, when about to describe unto us the glorious Transfiguration of the Lord, first of all direct his own and our attention to prayer? “He went up into a mountain to pray.” Why again does he, as if distrusting the insight of certain readers and hearers of the Gospel, or as if fearing that they might not sufficiently understand the importance of the fact to be observed, repeat

that the transfiguration of the Lord took place during prayer: “As He prayed.” Why, if not to point out to us in prayer — the way to the light of Tabor, the key to spiritual mysteries, the might of divine revelation? If the divinely inspired Evangelist found it so necessary to associate the idea of prayer with the description of the glory of Tabor, then it certainly will not be amiss on our part also, Christians, to associate however short a meditation on the power and efficacy of prayer with remembrance of the glorious Transfiguration of our Lord.

Though it is to be hoped that there are none in this house of prayer who do not more or less comprehend the power of prayer and efficacy of prayer, yet in order to obtain a correct idea thereof, let us be allowed to meditate upon the subject, as if it were quite unknown to us. Well then: has any prayer any effect at all? This question cannot long remain unanswered. It is solved by the common sense of mankind, since all — from the Christian, enlightened by the pure light of faith, down to the pagan darkened by gross superstition — all acknowledge the obligation of prayer; while the greater and better part of mankind do really fulfill the obligation, though not exactly in the same way, nor with the same success. But why ordain, or have recourse to prayer — unless some power is recognized in it, or some effect expected to attend it? Should anyone ask, How is it the heathen can be witness of the power of prayer when they, being ignorant of the true worship of the Lord, cannot consequently be in possession of the true form of prayer? Then such a one we will in turn ask, How is it that they have anything like prayer at all? In whatever way we may seek to explain a manifestation of prayer howsoever imperfect, the source of its origin will ever be found in the power of prayer. The heathen

also pray, either because God, although forsaken by His creatures, forsakes not them, but leaves even in their darkened hearts some rays of His light, “which lighteth every man who cometh into the world, and which the darkness comprehendeth not” (John 1:9,5) — a light which awakens even in the flesh a certain feeling of a spiritual want, affords a certain presentiment of the possibility of its satisfaction, and thus incites a desire to call on an unknown God for unknown help; or they pray because even out of the slough of sensuality, in which paganism was sunk, there sometimes emerged a few winged souls who, conscious of the vileness and uncleanness of their condition, did through a sincere desire and exertion to know the powers of the spiritual world attain to some communion with them, and did subsequently teach others to attain to the same, by means of a sincere and strong desire, that is to say, by means of prayer.

Again, they pray because ever since those times, when the true worship of God still prevailed throughout mankind, and the power and efficacy of true prayer were therefore well known to it, there still remained, notwithstanding the subsequent corruption of divine worship, an indelible general conviction, both of the necessity of worship, and of the advantages of prayer, that is to say, of its power and efficacy. Unfortunately there is a philosophy (of that kind which the Apostle Paul designates as “philosophy after the rudiments of the world and vain deceit” (Col. 2:8)) which, disdaining the universal testimony of humanity, deems itself able to find out the best witness of the truth. It teaches that the whole world is bound by the bonds of causes and effects, in which even free beings are more or less entangled; and when, for instance, man prays for abundance of the fruits of the earth, the said abundance depending on the temperature of the atmosphere — this temperature on the action and reaction of the sun, earth, and water, and their action again on the laws of the universe, once for all ordained by the Creator, and operating immediately and in obedience to fixed laws, he then is praying either to no purpose or at most only for the purpose of evincing his humility and submission to the might and majesty of the Creator.

Let us note that even such a philosophy cannot

deprive prayer of that effect at least, which begets in man a spirit of lowliness towards God; and this alone is of no small value, and is a redeeming influence. But this is not all. Ask any disciple of this philosophy with whom you may meet which is better, a skillfully constructed machine or a living being, intelligent and free, and a well-ordered community of such beings? Who is greater? the artisan who constructs the machine, and regulates its movements, or a father who begets children, and by education forms them after his own likeness; or a king who has founded a kingdom of freemen, and governs them as they themselves wish to be governed, provided his wise and gracious designs are not controverted.

The choice here is not a difficult one, and there is no need to wait for the answer. Ask him again, why he prefers to see in the work of the all-perfect Creator, rather a perfect specimen of art than the well-ordered kingdom of a wise monarch, or the great mansion of an all-bountiful Father? Why would such people more readily picture to themselves God as the Architect of the universe, than as the King of heaven and earth and the Father of spirits? We leave them to seek an answer to this in their own conscience; while for our present purpose, it is quite sufficient to admit that if God is not only our Creator, but also our King and Father, then undoubtedly the children will not call in vain on their Father, nor will the King shut His ears against the sons of His kingdom.

And is it then to be wondered at that a loving Father should, to satisfy the righteous, or at all events the innocent desire of a son, stop or alter the movements of the machine which He has formed? We must not wonder then, if our most gracious heavenly Father, in answer to the prayers of His earth-born children, gives some new and unusual direction to nature governed by the law of necessity. It is by means of such a comparison that the Truth itself, the Word itself, explains the efficacy of prayer: “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father Who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him” (Matt. 7:11).

There are some Christians, understanding and performing the act of prayer rather in an outward

ritual sense, than in an inward spiritual one, who whilst in no way doubting in the general belief that prayer is powerful and efficacious, are mistaken, or do entirely err in the application of this truth to themselves and to their prayer.

Praying repeatedly, and seeing nothing result from their prayers, either in themselves or around them, they, instead of doubting the sincerity and merit of their own prayers, are prone to imbibe the idea inspired by a spirit of sloth and self-deceit, that powerful and availing prayer must needs be some peculiar gift of grace, reserved for some of God's elect, and for certain extraordinary cases only.... To such we say without hesitation that there is no man whose prayer may not become powerful, if he only desire it steadfastly and with a pure heart, with faith and hope in God, and that there is no case in which his prayer will not be granted, if only its object be not contrary to the wisdom and mercy of God, or to the true welfare of the suppliant. This is saying much; we trust, nevertheless, that we are not deceiving the true lovers of prayer.

Figure to yourselves a man who, by the power of prayer, shuts or opens the heavens, stops or brings down rain, commands that a handful of flour and a little oil should suffice to feed several persons for several months, or perhaps even for more than a year and it is fulfilled; breathes on a dead man, and restores him to life; brings down fire from heaven to consume a sacrifice and an altar immersed in water. What can appear more extraordinary than this power of prayer? But it appears so only to a man who knows not what spiritual power is, whilst to one who does, it appears only as the act of a man like unto ourselves.

This is not my own opinion merely, but the teaching of an apostle, St. James who, exhorting us to pray one for another, and wishing to incite us thereto, says "that the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16), and confirms this general precept and convincing motive by the example of that extraordinary man whom we have just pictured, and whom he represents as a man like unto ourselves: "Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on

the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit" (James 5:17-18). Why is it said here that this wonderworking Elijah "was a man subject to like passions as we are?" It is just that we, deeming him an extraordinary man, should not be discouraged from imitating him, and from attaining power in prayer.

If, notwithstanding, it appears to you that to imitate the prayers of the prophet be a lot far above your mediocrity, and a height unattainable by you, then imagine yourselves as much below the prophet as you please, imagine yourselves to be even less than Christians, say heathens, and even then, I affirm that your prayer may be powerful and effectual. It may, and what more? it may convert you from heathenism to Christianity, it may lead you to the true knowledge and worship of God, even though they be till then unknown to you; and if there be no man near who can direct you to it, then will it open the heavens, and bring down thence an angel unto you, who will teach you. But am I not dreaming and carried away by my desire to invite you to fervent and effectual prayer? No, my brethren and fellow worshippers, I am speaking but of what has actually happened before, and therefore may happen again, and which has the testimony of our holy books.

The Roman centurion Cornelius, whom we know from the Acts of the Apostles, was a gentile; it is not known whether he knew the One God, but certain it is that he did not know "Jesus Christ Whom God hath sent;" but he did as much good as he was able: he feared and prayed always to God, though to him unknown: "a devout man, and one who feared God with all his house, who gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always" (Acts 10:2). And what did the unceasing prayer of the Gentile achieve? It did indeed call down heaven upon him, and brought to his aid high and even divine powers. In the midst of his prayers an angel appears to him, saying, "Cornelius, thy prayer is heard" (Acts 10:31), and then instructs him to send for the Apostle Peter. And when the apostle was preaching unto him Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, even before baptism, was poured from on high upon Cornelius.

Search in your mind, invent if you will, some object which may seem inaccessible to the power of prayer, and we do not despair of being able to prove to you, by the light of the Word of God, that it is accessible and attainable, though the same may appear impossible. Imagine to yourselves, for instance, a whole nation that has offended God by some heavy crime; suppose also that God has already declared His righteous will to destroy that nation, and that at this awful moment there remains but one man upon earth who can pray for this people, already about to be engulfed by hell. Does it not seem to you that it is no longer possible to save this people? The experience of Moses has proved that even this is possible. The children of Israel, immediately after the glorious covenant on Mount Sinai, suddenly relapse into idolatry.

Moses stands before the Lord on the mountain. Hear and understand what marvelous words the Lord then spake unto Moses: "Now therefore let Me alone, that My wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them." O Lord God of spirits and of all flesh! Can this Thy servant, strong only in Thy strength, oppose himself to the fulfillment of Thy will? Let Me alone, says He, I wish to declare My righteous wrath, I wish to destroy this nation: but thou restrainest Me. "Let Me alone, that My wrath may wax hot against them, that I may consume them." What then? The suppliant does not even then leave God, but redoubles his prayers; and the wrath of the invincible Almighty yields to the power of the prayer of a mortal man! "And the Lord repented of the evil which He thought to do unto His people" (Exod. 23:14). Weigh here, if you can, the miraculous power of prayer — and find something, after this, which it cannot achieve for our salvation!

That we may again perceive with what ease the key of prayer opens spiritual and divine treasures, let us once more glance towards Mount Tabor, which we have endeavored to approach in these our present meditations. Let us once more earnestly contemplate the transfiguration of the Lord as described to us by the Evangelist: "And He went up into a mountain to pray: and as He prayed, the fashion of His countenance was altered," etc. If we may dare by these few traits

to divine the heart-thoughts of the divine Jesus: then does it seem that on the way to Mount Tabor, His direct and immediate object was not the transfiguration, but simply prayer: "He went up into a mountain to pray."

It seems as if on the very mountain itself, even at the very moment of transfiguration, His sole object was prayer: And as He prayed, *etc.* Nor will one who meditates on this deem the supposition improbable that the object of this, our Savior's prayer, must have been the preparation of Himself and His disciples for His approaching passion and death on the Cross, which He had but recently revealed unto them (Luke 9:22), and of which, during the transfiguration itself, Moses and Elijah spake unto Him (Luke 9:31). How was it then, that amidst this prayer of suffering, glory was revealed? Spontaneously, we may say, as the flower and fruit of prayer full of living power. The spirit of prayer, uniting itself with the Spirit of God, filled the soul of Jesus with light; the super-abundance of that light, which could no longer be contained within His soul, diffused itself throughout His body, shone forth in His countenance, and not finding space sufficient to contain it there, illuminated and transfigured even His very raiment; extending itself still farther, it overspread the souls of the apostles, being reflected in the exclamation of Peter: "Master, it is good for us to be here!"

It penetrated into the domain of the invisible world, and drew thence Moses and Elijah, reached unto the very bosom of the heavenly Father, and moved His love to a solemn testimony of His beloved: "This is My beloved Son!" O miracle of prayer, embracing in one act heaven, earth, and divinity itself! Let no one say that this example of prayer does not concern us, as being an act of the God-Man. It concerns us Christians also; for in us, though not in a like degree, must be accomplished the same as was in Christ: "Let this mind be in you," says the Apostle, "which was also in Christ Jesus (Phil. 2:5).

But it is time at last to inquire why it is that so many prayers remain without effect, if every prayer may always be so powerful and effectual? For it is for the sake of this question principally that we have said all that which we have as yet spoken. Let us

particularly note one instance, in which a prayer appears not to be answered, whereas it is really answered in an unexpected and sublime way. Thus, Paul “besought the Lord thrice, to be delivered from a thorn in the flesh;” but God answered him: “My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness” (II Cor. 12:8-9).

The temptation is not removed: but a victory still more wonderful is granted over the continuing temptation. If we except such cases, all unsuccessful prayers are accounted for by this short saying of the apostle: “Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts (James 4:3). Our prayers are fruitless, either because they are not fervent and persevering supplications, which proceed from the depth of our souls, and into which our whole soul is poured forth, but

are only weak desires which we utter without fervor, thinking they must needs be fulfilled of their own accord; or because our supplications are unclean and evil, inasmuch as we ask that which is hurtful and of no benefit to our souls; or ask things not for the glory of God, but for the gratification of our carnal and selfish desires.

Pray, Christian, fervently and with the whole might of thy soul, pray diligently and perseveringly, pray rightly and purely; and if thou art not thyself equal to it, then pray for prayer itself, and by prayer thou wilt first obtain true and effectual prayer, and then this prayer shall overcome all things with thee and obtain all things for thee: it will guide thee unto Mount Tabor or create a Tabor within thee: it will call down heaven into thy soul, and raise thy soul into heaven. Amen.

*Sermon III, edited for clarity, from a photo-reproduction of the classic translation
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THE CALENDAR QUESTION

Fr. Basile Sakkas

(continued from the previous issue)

CHAPTER THREE

THE ECCLESIASTICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CALENDAR

It is well known that the sacred canons — under the penalty of deposition and excommunication — forbid participation in the mysteries of heretics or schismatics and even simple communal prayer with them. Orthodox Christians cannot fraternize with heretics, not only in those matters which concern sacred things, but not even, if it is possible, in the expressions of common daily life, for example:

1. St. John the Evangelist and Theologian refused to enter into the public baths where the famous heretic of antiquity Cerinthus was present.

2. The 11th Canon of the Sixth Ecumenical Council prescribes: Let no one enrolled in the sacerdotal order, or any lay man, eat the unleavened bread of the Jews, or in any way become familiar with the Jews, or call them in the case of sickness, or take any medicines from them, or even bathe with them in the public bathhouses. Should anyone attempt to do this, in case he is a clergyman, let

him be deposed; if he be a layman, let him be excommunicated.

And truly, this is natural, because we cannot separate our spiritual life from our daily lives. If we did this, we would be obliged to introduce “parentheses” into our life which would “free” us of our continual remembrance of God, and hence, all our activities pertaining to our business, our family, our entertainments and relaxation, would neither coincide, nor be directed towards the final goal of our existence: union with our God and Savior. An Orthodox Christian conducts his everyday life in one fashion, and he who is a heathen or heretic in another fashion. He has another purpose, another rationale, another horizon, another hope; in a word: he is another man. The modernists of today, however, as adherents of a love which is sentimental, have lost all notion of the close and tightly-knit relationship which exists between dogma and the administration of the Church, between the spiritual and disciplinary expression

of the life of the Church as a whole as well as in the life of each one of the faithful. Thus, in a very superficial manner, with no theological basis, they attribute to the canons in question an intolerant or fanatical disposition of an ecclesiastical epoch long past. But this is not the meaning of canonical discipline. The Church is neither passionate, nor fanatical, nor misanthropic. She loves men with the love of God, “Who willeth that all men be saved, and come unto the knowledge of the truth” (II Tim. 2:4). Let us, therefore, see what is the real cause for this prohibition of communion with heretics.

A. The Adoption of the Faithful by Jesus Christ

In his Epistle to the Ephesians, the Apostle Paul teaches us that “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...hath chosen and preordained us unto the adoption of children” and that this “adoption” takes place “by Jesus Christ”, not because of our so-called “merits”, but “according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace” (Eph. 1:3-6).

Indeed, by Holy Communion in the Divine Mysteries we become “of one body” (Eph. 3:6) and of one blood with Christ. As the Apostle Paul says: “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the Blood of Christ? the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the Body of Christ? For we being many, are one bread, and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread” (I Cor. 10:16-17). In another place, the Savior Himself affirms that “whoso eateth my Flesh and drinketh my Blood, dwell-eth in Me, and I in him” (John 6:56). Further, the Holy Church invites us, saying, “Partake ye of the Body of Christ, taste of the source of immortality.” If, therefore, we become “of one body” and “of one blood” with Christ Himself, we are consequently all brethren among ourselves. For this reason, the Sacred Scriptures call Christ the “firstborn among many brethren” and that we are “conformed to the image of the Son” (Rom. 8:29) of God our Father.

Through our adoption by Christ, therefore, we become brethren, not according to the model of a trade-union, or some social body, or even because of our acceptance of a common ideology, but precisely

on the basis of a spiritual and charismatic reality. We are brethren because we have all come from the same womb, the same matrix: the baptismal font of Christ’s Catholic Church.

According to the teaching of St. Cyprian of Carthage, “whoever does not have the Church as his Mother cannot have God as his Father.” Truly the assembly of the heretics — since it is not the Church — does not have a womb, *i.e.*, a baptismal font, in order to give birth to sons and daughters for the kingdom of the Heavens. Thus, the heretic is not my brother, since he does not have the same Mother as I, and consequently, not the same Father.

If I should dare, together with a heretic, to call the God of heaven “Our Father”, this would be incongruous and a lie. How could I attribute to a heretic filial and fraternal qualities which, by nature, he does not possess? If I am adopted by the Father through Jesus Christ and then return, again to the same level as the heretic, I show that I esteem as nothing the adoption which was granted me according to grace. I under-estimate this gift and I scorn and dishonor the Giver and Provider, thus “proving myself ungrateful towards the Benefactor.”

B. A Clear Distinction Exists between the Sons and the Strangers.

Being, by grace, sons of the “free woman”, that is, of the Church which is the Mother of us all, we have no right to consider ourselves the equals of the sons of Hagar, the Egyptian woman, “the slave”, whose children do not inherit the kingdom of the heavens because, spiritually, she is barren. Moreover, we learn from the Scriptures that the free-born sons do not have their inheritance with the sons of slaves.

It is for this, therefore, that the canons forbid communal prayer with heretics and schismatics; thus, in a simple manner, they make manifest in actual deed the sacramental reality of our adoption in Christ and the spiritual kinship that exists among the brethren who are members of the same Body. For the heretic has neither a temple, nor an altar, nor a priesthood through which he can come to be “of the same blood” as myself, and consequently, invoke together with me my Father

Who is in the heavens. Therefore, the Holy Church commands:

71st Apostolic Canon

If any Christian brings oil to a temple of the heathen, or to a synagogue of the Jews, during their festivals, or lights lamps for them, let him be excommunicated.

45th Apostolic Canon

Let any bishop, or presbyter, or deacon who merely joins in prayer with heretics be excommunicated; if, on the other hand, he has permitted them to perform any service as clergymen, let him be deposed.

33rd Canon of the Council of Laodicea

One must not join in prayer with heretics or schismatics.

32nd Canon of the Council of Laodicea

One must not accept the blessings of heretics which are absurdities (*alogiae*) rather than blessings (*eulogiae*).

38th Canon of the Council of Laodicea

One must not accept unleavened wafers from the Jews, nor participate in their impieties.

46th Apostolic Canon

We command that any bishop or presbyter who has accepted any heretic's baptism or sacrifice, be deposed; for what accord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath a believer with an infidel?

68th Apostolic Canon

If any bishop, or presbyter, or deacon receive a second ordination from anyone, let him and the one who ordained him be deposed, unless it be established that his ordination had been performed by heretics; for those who have been baptized or ordained by such persons cannot possibly be either believers or clergymen.

65th Apostolic Canon

If any clergyman or layman enter a synagogue of the Jews or of heretics to pray, let him be both deposed and excommunicated.

6th Canon of the Council of Laodicea

Concerning the necessity of not permitting heretics to come into the house of God, so long as they persist in their heresy.

9th Canon of the Council of Laodicea

Concerning the fact that those belonging to the Church must not be allowed to go visiting the

cemeteries or the so-called *martyria* (*i.e.*, shrines of martyrs) of any heretics, for the purpose of prayer or for cure; but, on the contrary, those who do so, if they be among the faithful, shall be excluded from communion for a time until they repent and confess that they erred, at which time they may be readmitted to communion.

9th Canon of St. Timothy of Alexandria

Question: Ought a clergyman to pray when Arians or other heretics are present; or does it not matter, when he himself (and not they) is making the prayer, that is to say, the Offering?

Answer: During the divine Offering (*anaphora*), the deacon addresses the congregation before the kiss of peace, saying: "Those of you who are not in communion, depart hence." There ought not, therefore, to be any persons present such as those mentioned, unless they promise to repent and abandon their heresy.

C. Distinction between the Faithful and the Unbelievers by Means of the Festal Calendar

In opposition to the followers of the Phanar, who have decreed that the feasts should be celebrated at the same time and on the same dates with heretics, the canons, to the contrary, forbid that the dates of our feasts voluntarily coincide with those of the heretics.

7th and 70th Apostolic Canons

If any bishop, or presbyter, or deacon celebrate the holy day of Pascha with the Jews before the vernal equinox, let him be deposed. If any bishop, or presbyter, or deacon, or anyone at all of the clergy, fasts together with the Jews, or celebrates a holiday together with them, or accepts from them holiday gifts or favors, such as unleavened wafers, or any such thing, let him be deposed from office; but if he be a layman, let him be excommunicated.

37th and 39th Canons of the Council of Laodicea

One must not accept holiday gifts sent by Jews or heretics, nor celebrate any holiday with them. One must not join the heathen in celebration of holidays and festivals, and share in their godlessness.

History teaches us that the Hebrews hid the date of the feast of Pascha from the Samaritans; hence,

the Samaritans were obliged each year to have recourse to various contrivances in order to learn the real date. However, the Hebrews utilized various ruses to mislead the Samaritans and thus force them to celebrate their Pascha on a different date than their own.

We learn, therefore, from antiquity that the people of God avoided any voluntary coincidence of the dates of their feasts with those of the heretics.

D. Why We Have Separated from the New Calendarists

In view of all the aforesaid, we were obliged in 1924 to separate ourselves from the State Church of Greece because of the change of the ecclesiastical calendar, for this change:

1. undermines the dogmatic and canonical basis of the Orthodox Church and exposes the faithful of the Church to the dangerous influences of diverse heresies.

2. assails the canon concerning the determination of the date of Pascha, concerning which the councils and the fathers before us have passed judgment.

3. destroys the unity of the Church and her synodical principles and sows the seeds of division and anarchy among the Orthodox.

4. scorns the Church's Tradition which had been respected throughout the ages; whereas the councils of the Church have ordered us: "Let the ancient customs prevail" (6th of the First Ecumenical Council); "Inasmuch as custom and ancient tradition have prevailed..." (7th of the First Ecumenical Council); "...according both to the canons of the holy fathers and to ancient custom..." (8th of the Third Ecumenical Council). The councils speak in this manner concerning administrative questions which are quite inferior to that of the festal calendar.

5. does not only not represent the catholicity of the Church, but constitutes an arbitrary and rebellious action whose purpose is the dissolution of Catholic Orthodoxy.

We separated ourselves from them because the matter of the festal calendar is a matter of piety, for which cause the 31st Apostolic Canon justifies our separation. However, an even stronger reason is that, as we have said above, the festal calendar

has been utilized as the *avant-garde* of ecumenism which, despite all the jurisprudence of the new calendarists, constitutes a heresy "recognized as such by the councils and the fathers," according to the 15th canon of the First-Second Council of Constantinople.

CHAPTER FOUR

OTHER CONSEQUENCES OF THIS INNOVATION

A. Justification of the Papal Revolt

In his arbitrary innovation of the new calendar, the pope was consistent with his principles, for according to those principles he is, supposedly, "superior to the Ecumenical Councils." Yet the Scriptures teach us that "the foolishness of God is wiser than men" (I Cor. 1:25) and that "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world" (I Cor. 1:27) to put to shame the wise and mighty of this earth. The logic of God and the Church is superior to the logic of the world. Often, the world is not satisfied with the logic of the Church because it does not correspond to the demands of its own logic. At other times, the world considers the logic of the Church to be absurdity. The Apostle Paul, however, says that God wished to save the faithful "by the foolishness of preaching" (I Cor. 1:21).

The first thing which our fathers and the councils did, therefore, was to examine to what degree the papal arguments corresponded to the logic, requirements and interests of the Church. As for the scientific logic of this "deceptive age" which is to be abolished, it was relegated to second place. Inasmuch as the pope has wandered away from the Catholic Church of Christ, his arguments — even if they were "logical" or scientifically exact — proved of no advantage to him. For this reason the Church refused, rejected and anathematized the propositions of the Roman pontiff, and judged them unprofitable and injurious to the faithful, even if scientific precision was on the side of the innovator.

Therefore, having adopted the "tradition" of the pope's calendar, which they perfidiously mask under the appellation "the corrected Julian calendar," the new calendarists have simply confessed that they needed four centuries to understand that the pope was right, and that our holy fathers

suffered from an unhealthy anti-Latinism, as it were, to the degree that, despite the justice of the papal propositions, they rejected them out of perversity. Was it really worth the effort to resist the propositions of the pope for four centuries by means of anathemas only to accept today? Aside from any spiritual consideration, this affair is wholly ridiculous and inconsistent even from the point of view of simple human dignity.

Nevertheless, Nectarius, the patriarch of Jerusalem (*Rebuttal*, p. 214) says expressly: "We have not accepted the papal decrees nor shall we accept them. Be they forged or falsified or genuine, for us they are null and void." Dositheus, also a patriarch of Jerusalem, likewise points out: "Although the pope is a heretic — in spite of the fact that he is flesh and like the grass, and that his glory is like that of the flower of the grass which falls when the grass is dried up — nonetheless, he prides himself in having surpassed the knowledge of God in fashioning and making his own times and seasons and measurements of times besides those prescribed by the Lord; and thus he propounds and establishes new reckonings and new Paschalia against the teaching and Testament of the Lord" (*Tome of Joy*, p. 495).

B. The Creation of a Schism in the Church

Orthodox Greece did not accept the papal innovation. Three metropolitans separated themselves from the innovating hierarchy, and one of them, Chrysostom, the former metropolitan of Florina, was sent into exile. One could write volumes on the subject of the persecutions which the true Orthodox Christians have undergone and undergo to this very day. Nuns were forcibly stripped of their monastic habits at court trials and in the diocesan headquarters of the new calendarists; priests were forcibly defrocked and shaved by policemen in the basements of the archdiocese headquarters of Athens; churches were closed and the faithful were forced to take refuge in the forests and in caves in order to celebrate the Divine Liturgy. Accompanied by policemen, priests of the State Church entered the churches of the true Orthodox Christians and defiled the sanctuaries, overturned the holy altar tables and trampled upon the Bread

of the Eucharist, the Body of the Lord! Any icons which could not be taken down were chopped away with axes so that, together with the holy chalices and other holy utensils, they could be thrown into police trucks.

Our churches were demolished or blown up with dynamite. Our bishops and priests hid themselves, running from house to house, even as our Lord said, "the foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests" while these men had not "where to lay their heads" (Matt. 8:20). The monasteries were disbanded, closed, and defamed. Students of theology who followed the traditional calendar were not permitted to receive their diplomas. Marriages and baptisms performed by the clergy of the true Orthodox were not set down in state registers and thus, many children were declared illegitimate, and many widows were not permitted to receive pensions.

Yet, the attitude of the true Orthodox Christians was heroic. By the thousands, they protested, only to be cudgeled and dispersed by the police. Old men of ninety years were beaten. Nevertheless, they stood outside the locked doors of our churches, and held lighted candles as they stood on the sidewalk. And the old women, not wishing to confuse the House of the Living God with the Mount Gerizim of Innovation, would tell the police: "Close the church, my son, but whatever you do, it is here and here only that we shall come to worship the God of Truth." And truly, they did not lift up their hands to the foreign gods of the West. During the episcopacy of Archbishop Spyridon of unhappy memory, the persecutions reached their zenith. Here is an extract from the secular press (*Kathimerini*, 20/11/1952):

"Excesses! We are neither disposed to defend the old calendarists nor to condemn them! But whatever else the old calendarists may be — either naive, obstinate, or thick-headed — they are not criminals or vagrants. Nonetheless, in the offices of the archbishop, a priest and an old monk of eighty years were treated like common criminals. They tore off their *rassas* and shaved them by force. These victims visited our offices and we saw them. And we confess that, at the sight of their wretched and pitiable appearance, we were overcome by a feeling of profound compassion."

Any further comment is useless; yet, how many other such facts exist which the press could not or did not wish to discover.

A similar schism has taken place in Rumania, despite the fact that the present patriarch endeavors in vain to deny the existence of true Orthodox Christians in Rumania. Also, as we have learned, notable members of the clergy in Bulgaria have refused to follow the “diabolical innovation” (as it is called by the Abbot Philotheus Zervakos the Elder, a renowned figure among the new calendarists). It appears that the Russian Convent for Women has also refused to subscribe to this apostasy. The holy Monastery of Stavrovunion in Cyprus was disbanded because of the papal calendar. The holy Monastery of Valaam (in Finland) was likewise destroyed because of this accursed calendar. When it adopted the new calendar, the Monastery of Vatopedi on Mount Athos separated itself from the rest of the fathers of the Holy Mountain who no longer take part in any celebrations on the feast day of this “modernist” monastery.

There is no need to have recourse to exalted theological speculations since the Gospel says very clearly: “every tree is known by its fruit” (Luke 5:44). Let the new calendarists show us even one good fruit which has come from this innovation. Does it sanctify anyone? Does it edify the faithful? Does it bring back those who have gone astray? Has it united those who were divided? To the contrary, it has brought about schisms, divisions, enfeeblement and indifference. Do we need any other proofs that it does not come from God? But if it does not come from God, then it must by necessity have the demons as its origin, and is therefore clearly diabolical. Therefore, we sin if we espouse it.

Chrysostom Papadopoulos, the archbishop of Athens, became a laughingstock literally. He wished to prove that the *Sigillium* of 1593 was apocryphal, a fabrication of the “monks of Mt. Athos.” Yet, we have already presented that which he himself affirmed at an earlier time, when he was an archimandrite and professor at the University of Athens and had written a Church history textbook. As quoted in the book *Anguish*, by the theologian M. Karamitsos, in the chapter entitled “The

Profession of Faith of Archbishop Papadopoulos” (p. 39), Papadopoulos wrote:

“Still more officially, the new calendar was rejected by the Council of Constantinople convoked in 1593. The council rejected the Gregorian calendar as an innovation which contradicted the canons and the order of the Church.”

Further, he has written: “Because of this battle, Sophronius IV, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, left on a journey to collect funds in 1584. Arriving in Constantinople, he participated in that same year in the synodical commission convoked by Patriarch Jeremy II the Illustrious for the condemnation of the Gregorian calendar, whereby the Latin Church sought to lead the Orthodox astray” (from the *Church History*, p. 482, of Chrysostom Papadopoulos, as quoted in *The Executioners of Orthodoxy* by Abbess Magdalene, p. 293).

The renowned historian Paul Carolides, in his *World History* (Vol. I, p. 253) says the following: “However, in that it was not enacted with the agreement of the ancient Patriarchal Churches of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem — all of which still abided by the Julian reckoning — a schism ensued.” Behold, therefore, why we say that the Church did not change the calendar in 1924. If there is a schism, who are the schismatics? Moreover, we (the old calendarists that is) asked the following question of Archbishop Papadopoulos: “You say that the *sigillia* of the 16th century which anathematized the Gregorian calendar are the fabrications of the monks of Mt. Athos. Nonetheless, the codices which are found in the monastery of Mount Sinai, the holy Russian Monastery of St. Panteleimon and elsewhere are extremely ancient. At the time when they must have been written (or forged, according to your view), Orthodoxy was undergoing no controversy concerning the “new” and the “old” calendar and thus, who would have been interested in forging such codices and why? Further, eminent historians of the 18th and 19th centuries, such as Metropolitan Philaretos Vaphides and Metropolitan Meletius, confirm these documents.”

Yet the archbishop, who had nothing to say in response, responded with police action and persecutions. Is it really possible to consider as

Orthodox a calendar which brings about schism in the Church and persecution of the faithful? But if the “Gregorian” or “corrected Julian” calendar is not Orthodox, then what is it?

C. *The Enfeeblement of the Greek Church*

We feel great sympathy for the “conservative Orthodox” who have followed the innovating hierarchy and with emotion we watch their battles and sufferings and their resistance against the “cataclysm of sin” which menaces us all. They themselves recognize that the new calendar is a “diabolical innovation”, that it has created a “schism” and constitutes a “great mistake”. Yet, they do not understand that they contradict themselves.

What does “great mistake” signify? If the calendar does not cause harm to the Church, why should it be considered a “mistake”? If the calendar has brought about no consequences — either good or bad — we cannot base ourselves solely upon a sentimental attachment to the past and thus consider it a “mistake”. A “mistake” implies evil consequences or results. If, therefore, these consequences are injurious for the Church, how can I adopt them and have a “good defense before the dread judgment seat of Christ?” How can I follow something which (like the venerable Elder Philotheus Zervakos, abbot of the new calendar Monastery of Longovarda) I consider “diabolical”?

However, not having grasped the meaning of the calendar issue, the new calendarists imagine that one day the issue shall be forgotten and that the organism of the Church will dissolve this tumor little by little. Beloved brethren, can time alter the Tradition? Can falsehood be transformed into truth with the passage of time? God forbid! As soon as we have permitted a tiny worm to enter the fruit, no matter how small or imperceptible it is, it will not discontinue being a worm nor will it cease to grow until the fruit has become rotten. In such a case, not only does time not correct these things, but very much to the contrary, it makes them worse; look around you so that you may perceive the truth of these words.

Universal Zionism, the forerunner of the Antichrist, exercises a very subtle and penetrating propaganda in our days, using Masonry also as

its right arm. In this manner, it has succeeded in removing from the liturgical books of the Latins all the texts which relate to the deicide committed by ancient Israel, on the excuse that they were anti-Semitic. By removing these passages, the Latins confess that for 2000 years they have been suffering from an unhealthy anti-Semitism. Inasmuch as they are heretics and schismatics, they have understood nothing concerning the theological issue of the Israelite deicide. Ever since 1924 you new calendarists have admitted the corruptive principle of *aggiornamento*; now how shall you react when the professors of your universities (*e.g.*, the case of Prof. Alivizatos) support the principle of the “revision” of our liturgical texts? Truly, whether we chant such and such a troparion or kontakion is not a dogmatic question (notice, however, the suppression of the name of St. Photius the Great in the newly-published Menaia).

Archbishop Hieronymus of Athens favors many innovations:

1. that the priests cut their hair and their beards and go about in civilian dress.
2. that the use of organs and mixed choirs singing in harmony be adopted in the churches, although this is in contradiction of the tradition of the sacred music of our Church.
3. that Matins be suppressed and two Liturgies be served instead “in order to facilitate the faithful.” In this manner, anyone can enter in the middle of the first Liturgy and leave in the middle of the second, just like in the cinema. Hence, we adopt the practices and conceptions of the Latins.
4. that there be a change of the Paschalia (this is still being debated furiously). The proposal here is that the date of the celebration of Pascha be fixed so that it always occurs on the second Sunday of April.
5. that for “archeological” concerns, the iconostases in the churches be taken down.
6. that the sacrament of holy baptism be changed (read “mutilated”) little by little. Forget for a moment that the triple repetition of the Symbol of Faith has almost everywhere fallen into oblivion and instead of blessing the waters used for the baptism with the appropriate prayers,

previously blessed holy water is simply added (as though the fathers who prescribed that the Symbol of Faith be recited three times and that the waters be blessed directly knew nothing and we are therefore obliged to correct them). Moreover, the exorcisms are suppressed and the children are made to sit in the baptismal font and then water is poured upon their heads by the hands of the priest and thus there is no immersion.

Still, it is true that none of these things are “dogmatic”. It is well known that Pascha was not celebrated simultaneously by all the Christians in the earliest days of Christianity, and that the priests did not have long hair. The adherents of the demolition of the iconostases might even find “archeological” arguments in their favor. But what sensible man cannot comprehend that such tactics lead to the destruction and the suicide of Orthodoxy? When we say “destruction” and “suicide” we clearly mean this in a relative sense, because Orthodoxy is not in danger and has no need of our defense since the “gates of Hades shall not prevail against her” (Matt. 16:18).

We repeat that the Faith is not in danger, but that it is we who are in danger of falling away from it. The Faith remains the same, be it for one person, be it for a million. In the time of Noah, the true Faith was represented on earth by only eight people; on the day of Pentecost, by only about 3120 persons, and nonetheless, this was the same Faith. For this reason, we try to bear witness to the true Faith, but as to how many will acquire this Faith is a matter no longer within our competence, since it is the Savior Who “addeth to the Church such as should be saved” (Acts 2:47).

That which is called the “conservative spirit” has the tendency to emulate the example of the Apostle Peter in the garden of Gethsemane. Just as the apostle wished to become the “defender” of the Savior, so do we also wish to become the so-called “defenders” of the Church. But even as the Savior had no need of the defense of the first of the apostles, likewise the Church has no need of our defense. If someone could destroy the Church, not only will we not move our little finger to hinder him but, on the contrary, we will aid him in his work and we shall be eternally indebted to him for

having delivered us from a mirage, from a fantasy, from a human conception which has proved to be corruptible in essence, which can be destroyed, dissolved, which we had believed to be divine, God-given, incorruptible, and eternal. What a sad “Church”, which instead of saving us, has waited 2000 years for us to save it!

Thus we neither seek to “save” or “defend” the Church by our stand, neither do we seek to secure her survival or numerical increase or to super-impose her upon other human systems. Very simply, we seek to “liberate our souls” and transmit, as far as is possible, “that which has been committed to our trust” (I Tim. 6:20) just as we have received it, without any alteration, corruption, addition or subtraction. (The Latins think we are “fossilized” because of this, since they never understand anything at all.) But even if we do not do our sacred duty, the Church will not be destroyed even then; for as the elder Mordecai said to Queen Esther, “help and deliverance will come from another quarter” to the people of God (Esther 4:14). “God is able from these stones to raise up children unto Abraham” (Matt. 3:9) or to send “more than twelve legions of angels” to preach the Gospel of His Kingdom. Yet “it is from our hands that the blood” of those who have been led astray “shall be demanded” as the Prophet says (Gen. 9:5).

Therefore, when we say “destruction” and “suicide” as regards Orthodoxy, we mean the following: Apostasy must and shall come, and as the illustrious Bishop Ignaty Brianchaninov says, if we can save our own soul, this will be sufficient, and it will not be required of us to stretch out our hands to stop the apostasy. If, however, we tolerate or endorse even the smallest deviation from Tradition, then we shall become the collaborators of Antichrist and equally accountable to God. Even though we think we are Orthodox, yet we shall condemn ourselves and the millions of individuals who followed us away from the Life and the Truth. This is a crime; this is suicide.

Just as Christ had to be “betrayed”, yet “woe unto that man by whom He is betrayed” (Luke 22:22); even so the apostasy must also come about, yet woe unto us if, because of frivolousness or

negligence, we are responsible for its coming. In such a case we shall share the fate of Judas.

In truth, all those things which Archbishop Hieronymus favors were not dogmas in the papal-legalistic sense of the word, yet you grieve because you are convinced that piety is vilified and scorned by such actions. My conservative new-calendarist brethren, the Lord bears us witness that we love you; therefore, understand clearly that, from the moment when you tolerated the affront to piety in 1924, there was no reason why the corrosive action of this apostasy and of Antichrist should cease. In 1924, knowingly or unknowingly, you accepted and tolerated the beginning of the blasphemy against piety. The situation and your resistance has neither power nor might, since it is deprived of this action, and your conservatism not only brings no benefit but, to the contrary, lends support to the enemies of the Faith. Because of the erroneous course which you have taken, you have become weakened and your resistance has neither power nor might, since it is deprived of consequence. Thus, you have tolerated not only the affront to piety, but to the dogmas as well (for the two are interwoven). For example:

1. Is the so-called “lifting of the anathemas” on the part of Patriarch Athenagoras a dogmatic question or not? Can the anathemas of the Church ever be “lifted”? Even supposing that all the Latins become Orthodox, is it possible to lift the anathema of the Catholic Church of Christ against the heresy of the “Filioque”? Nonetheless, instead of protesting that this act was absurd and ridiculous in its very essence, your protest limited itself to the fact that Patriarch Athenagoras “lifted” the anathemas by himself, without the agreement of a Pan-Orthodox Council (as though even such a council could enact such a thing)! And now we ask you: Can a true Orthodox council annul the anathemas of the Church? If the next “Pan-Orthodox Council” or “Eighth Ecumenical Council” ratifies the arbitrary “lifting” of the anathemas by Athenagoras, will you then be satisfied? If you will not be satisfied, then please tell us: What will you do (since you will have just founded a new ecclesiology formerly unknown to Orthodoxy)?

2. Is the question of ecumenism dogmatic or not? Does another Church of Christ exist on this earth? Do not St. Mark of Ephesus, St. Cosmas of Aitolia, St. John of Kronstadt, and St. Nectarius of Aegina teach that the Orthodox Church constitutes the only true Church upon the earth and that those who are outside of her are wrongly called Christians? Nevertheless, the Holy Synod of Archbishop Hieronymus, by an official telegram sent to Athenagoras, confesses itself to be a “fellow-traveler” in his activities. Why, therefore, did you not separate yourselves from Hieronymus?

3. Is the question of permitting the Latins to participate in the Holy Mysteries a dogmatic one or not? Then why have you allowed your bishops to concelebrate with Metropolitan Nikodim of Leningrad at the Cathedral of Athens and not separated yourselves from those who concelebrated with him? You have been led astray by the protests of Archbishop Hieronymus to Patriarch Athenagoras (which protests were expressed precisely for this purpose). And were you actually fooled by this? Is it possible to consider such credulity on your part as faith? Is it not ridiculous to make an Orthodox protest concerning the heresy of the Bolshevik church to Patriarch Athenagoras, who is the prophet and apostle of the heresy of the “common cup”? What more have the Muscovites done than that which was not already taught to them by Patriarch Athenagoras? But further than this, the patriarch has approved of their action publicly (see ch. 5 of the present work), and your synod addresses “protests” to him! Since you are autocephalous, why does your Church not send its protest directly to the so-called “Patriarch of Moscow” and cease all communion with him until his wrong is corrected? In the face of such deceiving tactics, can we be duped by the terminology of the protest? If such were the case, it would no longer be a question of faith, but of literature.

4. During the Divine Liturgy which was celebrated at the Cathedral of St. Titus, Eugene, the Archbishop of Crete, placed a bishop’s panayia on the breast of Cardinal Willebrands while the people cried “*axios*” and chanted “Christ is risen” and hymns in honor of Pope Paul and Patriarch Athenagoras. An Orthodox *panayia* was also conferred

upon Cardinal Carpino by Timothy, the Metropolitan of Arcadia. Could you imagine St. Athanasius the Great conferring insignia of episcopal dignity upon the Arians? And you still acknowledge them as bishops of the Orthodox Catholic Church? Is this a dogmatic question or not? Yet, even on this occasion, you did not separate yourselves from them. Beloved “conservatives”, when will you separate yourselves from them so as not to be condemned together with the heretics? Have you forgotten that, because of an illegal marriage, St. Theodore the Studite struck out the name of St. Tarasius, the Patriarch of Constantinople, from the diptychs and opposed the emperor himself? But today it is not a question of an illegal marriage, but of the Bride of Christ!

Beloved “conservatives”, involuntarily you are playing the role of the deceiver. You simply are giving occasion for the apostasy to sweep over the Church a little more slowly, so that it will remain unobserved from generation to generation. This you do by accepting as “insignificant” and “unworthy of note” the various innovations presented to you. An “insignificant” fissure in the ocean floor can cause the largest transatlantic ocean liner to be swallowed up, and an amount of minerals “unworthy of note” in a drop of water can form immense stalactites. Since such tolerance exists as regards the aforementioned wrongs, the rest is but a question of time.

The “conservative” spirit can be a force only when it is permeated by an Orthodox spirit; by itself, it only constitutes a deception. The Uniate Cardinal Slipij has a white beard and he observes the “old calendar”. He spent thirteen years in concentration camps for his faith and has stood up as an implacable enemy against Latin influences on the “Byzantine rite”. Does all this place him within the enclosure of the Orthodox Church?

In 1924, the modernists made soundings and measured your resistance. In this manner, they observed clearly how they could confront and subdue you. They understand that you have become weakened and now they strive to attain their goals while flattering and coddling your sensibilities. They fear neither threats, nor protests, nor outcries; all such things were foreseen in their program and they know

how to operate. There is but one thing which makes them burn, which makes them fear, which makes them gnash their teeth: Your cutting off ties with them. As for the rest, you are wasting your time and you are causing harm to the Church.

D. The Church's Loss of Identity

The technocratic civilization of Antichrist strives to attain two things: a) the peas which fill the tin can have to be a certain uniform size; b) the men who dwell on earth have to become alike, like those canned peas. In order to rule, Antichrist has no need of individuals who are free and conscious, but of “atoms” which constitute cells, which in turn make up an amorphous, homogeneous and anonymous mass. He seeks to achieve this by various means, utilizing idealistic slogans such as “Liberty”, “Equality”, “Brotherhood”, *etc.*, which however, have as their basic principle the destruction of the idea of the hierarchy of values. By means of Masonry, he aims at the equalization of all persons and all things. Since the family is the strength of the individual and of a conscientious society, it must be abolished slowly by degrees. By means of feminism, he aims first at the equalization of the two sexes, which would replace the hierarchical distinction between man and woman. Then he proposes a “new couple” which would possess a hierarchical “joint-rule” and equality between male and female, an equalization from the point of view of equal rights so that there would be no real head in the new family. He also institutes an equalization of vocations and the outward signs of distinction, and moreover, an equalization of external appearances; the distinction that exists in their dress and hair style must also be confounded. Unfortunately, there are few who recognize that the spirit of Antichrist brings about new formulas in the social structure which have already created dreadful spiritual consequences for the entire world. The family also is warred upon by the decay of morals. The mothers and fathers of tomorrow are often so spiritually and carnally depraved, they can only transmit to their children what they themselves possess. And yet one speaks of “liberation”.

The equalization of individuals is performed principally in the religious and spiritual domain.

Until recently, each heresy claimed the truth exclusively for itself. Today, however, things are presented under a completely different light. Truth becomes nothing but a relative matter and, in reality, does not exist; it is necessary to destroy the spiritual faculties which God has given man. We do not oppose the cinema and the theater and television from a spirit of pietism or puritanism, but we ascertain each day that a terrible influence is exercised by these spectacles which seek to inactivate the human mind, which itself has become exhausted and lulled and brings itself to a state of doubt and indifference towards God. Through these things, eternity has become something which is uncertain for man, and he limits his efforts to visible things which are the only things he accepts as real and certain. Thus, he joins with other men in their efforts to attain common and earthly ideals; the "things which are unseen" constitute a utopia and an uncertainty as far as he is concerned.

The natural consequence of this is for man to seek to improve the conditions of his life on this earth, not in a pacific manner but a pacifistic one. The Church becomes an obstacle for him since she constantly reminds him of the futility of this world and endeavors to orient his attention towards the heavens and the things which are to come. The Church demands sacrifices, purity, effort, affliction and rejects all overestimation of earthly things. Hence, the clouded mind is no longer able to discern the absoluteness of the Truth of the Gospels, and it seeks to appease its conscience by a compromise between the demands of religion and the demands of the materialistic world. It seeks to receive an assurance of everlasting life (for itself) just in case there really does exist an eternal life after death. Antichrist has already taken this metaphysical need of man into consideration and thus he has proposed an idealistic religion to him with high-sounding words and slogans: "God is love, and therefore we must love all men and consider them as our brothers aside from their religious beliefs." Above all else, we must "live in peace with one another with sentiments of mutual respect towards the ideas, customs, usages and traditions of others;" we must "turn our attention towards always doing good and we should come

to the aid of others who are in need and especially those who suffer," because "it is of little importance what one believes, just so long as he is sincere in his convictions and his motives" — and many other such words does he say which, at first sight, fascinate one.

Since heresy strives by means of a half truth to conceal the other half, there is never mention made of the Second Coming of Christ, or of eternal Judgment, or of confessing the Faith "even to death;" nor are the many admonitions of the Gospel heeded, such as, "strait is the gate and narrow is the way" (Matt. 6:14); "we must through much affliction enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22); "in the world ye shall have tribulation" (John 16:33); the saved shall "come out of great tribulation" (Rev. 7:14); nor, finally, that "the whole world lieth in evil" (John 5:19, Gal. 1:14, Eph. 5:16), a fact which one encounters on almost every page of the sacred Scriptures and the writings of the fathers.

Obviously, the coming of the Antichrist is not discussed (II Thess. 2), nor that, in the last days, "evil men and seducers shall grow worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (II Tim. 3:13), nor that "many shall be deceived" (see Mark 13:6), "if it were possible, even the elect" (Mark 13:22), nor that "in the last days, people shall more and more become egoists, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those who are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" (II Tim. 3:2-3). Shepherds no longer remind their flocks that upon earth we are "strangers and pilgrims" (Heb. 11:13) and "hated by all men for the sake of the name" of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

To the contrary, the world is led towards a narcotic paradise, a kind of artificial euphoria, where man endeavors to attain the maximum satisfaction possible. Religion becomes no longer a life in Christ, but is reduced to the level of a simple intellectual conviction which one adopts either out of habit, or because of one's education, or because of the influence of the environment in which one has always lived and it has become, thus, only a

support of civilization and culture. Yet the holy Church, foreseeing the degeneration of this post-Christian era in which we live, warns us through her holy apostles: "Be not conformed to this world" (Rom. 12:2).

Up until 1924, Orthodoxy lived her own life in the midst of the world, a life "hid in Christ" (Col. 3:3). By the example and sanctifying intercession of our Lady the Theotokos, the holy angels, prophets, apostles, righteous fathers, mothers, martyrs and confessors, the believer became conscious of his lofty and eternal destiny, that he is not like an atomic particle, or one of the little uniform peas which fill Antichrist's cans, but rather, that he is an individual, the hairs of whose head are numbered, that he holds in his hand a "white stone" (Rev. 2:17) on which his own name is written and that this name is unique. It is this unique name which gives him the property of being a man, created in the image and likeness of God, "a little lower than the angels" (Ps. 8:6) by nature, but called to become a "god according to grace" who shall surpass the angelic hosts in honor, even as did the most holy Virgin Mary.

He is a man because, in contrast to the other creatures of this earth, he possesses a rational soul, and since he is a rational soul and a temple of God, he has received a calling, a destiny and the possibility of the freedom of choice and of eternity. All these things make him a person who is responsible for his actions. With purpose and with a prescribed itinerary, he journeys upon the earth of his pilgrimage with the aid of a compass. He follows his own direction and is not limited to following the course and direction of other men, since he is not a molecule of an anonymous mass, nor an animal of some flock. He has received a personal calling, "he knoweth Him in Whom he hath believed" (II Tim. 1:12) and can choose his own fellow travelers.

Up until 1924, therefore, Orthodoxy lived her own life and her calendar was nothing other than the pulse of this life, the beating of her heart. Since 1924, some sought to oblige Orthodoxy to follow the ways of the world and conform herself to this age, so that her heart would beat in time with the pulse of the world, even though "the fashion of this

world passeth away" (1 Cor. 7:31) in spite of all its rationality, its mathematical and astronomical precision, and in spite of its spatial and scientific exploits.

Tomorrow, perhaps, another more scientific calendar or another measure of time will be discovered. Why, for example, maintain the weekly cycle of seven days? Why should the U.N. not find another system in which the first day of the year would always be a "Sunday", for example, with, as a result, new monthly divisions? Then would it be necessary for Orthodoxy to change her Paschalia, her Octoechos, her Menaia, and her entire life and Tradition once more in order to conform and adapt herself to the new demands of a more recent epoch?

The reformers of 1924 had not yet comprehended that "heaven and earth shall pass away" (Matt. 24:35) in spite of all their chronological systems and that all questions concerning these things are "child's play" according to the words of Patriarch Jeremy II the Illustrious, and therefore they agreed to the change forty-seven years ago. By this action, the Church, instead of sanctifying and vivifying the world and giving it new dimensions "beyond time", is obliged to adapt herself to the molds which the world provides for her, to conform herself to the world and be dragged behind the world's chariot like the corpse of Hector.

A man becomes sanctified by gazing upon the holy icons and becoming himself an "icon." Consider the possibility of someone taking these icons and replacing them with ones in which the most holy Mother of God was painted according to the features of a courtesan of Rome during the Italian Renaissance. Would this not justify the Masonic "bibles" which declare that "man created God in his image and likeness?" So it is that men cannot grasp the beauty of Orthodox icons and prefer the flesh-worshipping paintings of the West in their stead. Likewise, not being able to perceive the spiritual and super-temporal dimensions of the Church, they prefer the "precision" of the Gregorian calendar. Hence, their icons, their music, their architecture, their calendar, their everything are in accord with their "faith", as St. John of Damascus teaches us.

E. The Danger of Scientism

Having lost hope of the Second Coming of Christ, men seek the totality of their happiness in things of this earth. This “happiness” depends upon the progress of humanity; progress is dependent upon the development of science and science presupposes precision. Thus, the search for scientific precision has now become a psychosis, because the happiness they seek is purely humanistic. When men reached the moon, Archbishop Hieronymus called this “...humanity’s greatest miracle.” Doxologies were chanted in the Cathedral of Athens and special prayers and hymns were improvised in parish churches in honor of the astronauts. What does it matter if they are heretics when they have succeeded in walking on the moon. Behold “miracles” which are tangible indeed!

The greatest religious corporation of Greece, Ζωή (*Life*), which has given spiritual birth to Archbishop Hieronymus and the greater part of the new metropolitans (who uncanonically replaced the former ones), publishes a yearly religious calendar. Except for a bearded old man on the front page (which, apparently, is a symbol of some sort of vague deism), their calendar for the year 1970 was full of pictures of astronauts, special contraptions, lunar vehicles and the inventors of missiles. Ζωή’s “religious” calendar found room for all these things, but for the sign of the Cross, for an icon of the Savior or of her who is “more honorable than the Cherubim” — “there was no room for them” (Luke 2:7).

The astronauts simply moved about from one place to another within the limits of nature. Our saints, however, lived like “celestial men and earthly angels” and as ones who “conquered the flesh, thereby conquering nature. And having conquered nature, they became supernatural.” Yet, even if the astronauts traverse all the universe’s galaxies, they can never surpass nature without possessing the “gladdening sorrow” of the Orthodox.

Are these, therefore, the things that impress Archbishop Hieronymus and his adherents? Are these the exploits which dazzle them and bring them to a state of delirium? Is this supposed to be the attitude and outlook of an Orthodox archbishop who because of his faith and position

does not “look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal” (II Cor. 4:18)?

Behold, therefore, why the calendar change of 1924 is a proof of the spiritual decadence of the majority of those who arbitrarily claim the title “Canonical Orthodoxy”.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE OBJECTIONS OF OUR ADVERSARIES

In this, the fifth and penultimate chapter of the present memorandum, may I be pardoned, holy Master, if I take advantage of your paternal affection by including here the arguments and objections of our adversaries. I shall try to answer them as briefly as possible on the basis of our most holy Tradition.

A. “The Calendar Issue is But a Minor Detail.”

From all that has been stated above, we hope it has become manifest that, insofar as the Tradition, piety, and the doctrine of the Church have been scorned because of the introduction of the Gregorian calendar, it is impossible to consider this affair as a “detail”, no matter how minor one might wish to esteem it. In the spiritual domain, a commandment is not measured quantitatively, by its volume, but by the dignity of Him Who commands. Obviously, the fruit of the tree in the midst of Eden was also a “detail”, yet Who gave the commandment concerning it and what were the consequences of the transgression of this commandment?

1. Aaron was not permitted to weep over his sons whom God punished with death because of a “detail”, that is, because they put “strange fire” upon the altar (Lev. 10:1).

2. Someone dared to collect wood on the Sabbath day and was stoned by the entire assembly of the sons of Israel (Num. 16:32-36). This was also a “detail”.

3. The Lord struck down Uza with a lightning bolt for touching (a “detail”) the Ark of the Covenant in order to protect it (II Sam. 6:6-8) which was the privilege of the Levites alone; on the other hand, He permitted that the Ark be captured

by the Philistines, who even placed statuettes of five golden mice and five golden emerods in it (I Sam. 6:4).

4. The holy Seven Youths of the Maccabees preferred martyrdom (IV Macc. 4-18) to eating swine's flesh (a "detail"), although this was but a temporary prescription, for the instruction of Israel.

Because of these things, our holy fathers have transmitted the following to us as a spiritual heritage:

1. "...Be it known unto thee that even the slightest rejection of things which have been transmitted will bring contempt upon the entire doctrine." "...Even if one alter the least part of it (religion and the Faith), one does a great act of unseemliness and immediately receives censure..." (4th and 6th Epistles of Photius the Great).

2. "All these things are truly common unto all and it is necessary before all else to guard those things which pertain to the Faith, from which, if one turns aside but a little, one sins a sin that is unto death" (Letter of St. Photius the Great to Pope Nicholas).

3. "We would prefer to shed our blood rather than add one iota" (St. Sabbas the Sanctified to the Emperor Anastasius).

4. "Do not speak to me of James and John, for even if one of the first angels of heaven corrupts the doctrine, let him be anathema. Now did he (Paul) not say: 'if they proclaim things which are contrary' or 'if they preach any other gospel than that which we have preached unto you' (Gal. 1:8), — even if they altered anything whatever, 'let them be anathema'" (St. John Chrysostom, *Commentary on Galatians*).

5. "We shall in no wise permit either ourselves or anyone else to change those things set down here or to change even one word or one syllable" (Fourth Ecumenical Council).

6. "He is a heretic and is subject to the laws concerning heretics who deviates in the slightest degree from the right Faith" (George Scholarius, later Patriarch Gennadius of Constantinople).

7. "It is necessary to drive from the communion of the Church, not only those who think erroneously concerning primary matters and the essentials concerning the Mysteries, but also those

who sin against secondary things; we reject these likewise as being teachers of 'evil doctrines'" (Athanasius of Paros, *Epitomy*, Ch 7).

B. "*The Julian Calendar is not Exact.*"

They tell us that, because of the inexactness of our calendar, we are in risk of eventually celebrating the feast of Christmas in the month of August! To this we answer that, in the first place, nowhere has Tradition taught us that we must celebrate the Nativity of our Savior with a backdrop of snow and pine trees; secondly, if we were to celebrate the Nativity only during winter, how could we celebrate it at the same time as our fellow Orthodox Christians in Australia? Also, when our Church calculates the feast of Pascha, she uses the "spring equinox;" yet is the equinox of Pascha a "spring equinox" for the Orthodox Australians?

We have received from St. Basil the Great that "It is not meet to worship seasons, but rather, the Lord." St. John Chrysostom also commands: "We do not observe days and seasons and years, but we look to abide in everything with the Church in all exactness, preferring love and peace above all else."

One must not forget that the Church has never had a scholastic and rationalistic notion concerning precision. Unencumbered by the corset of the spirit of scholasticism, the Church grants new dimensions to the life of her children. And these dimensions are incomparably vaster than the dimensions of the reality and precision of this finite world.

We encounter this attitude of the Church not only in the realms of astronomy, but also in those of history, literature and, generally, in all such realms. For instance, the historical inscription on the Cross was "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews" (although this is not reported in an identical fashion by the four Evangelists). Nevertheless, in our iconography, we prefer the inscription "The King of Glory" (see I Cor. 2:8) or "The Scion" (Ezek. 17:22-24) because our mystical theology has precedence over historical precision. Beholding Jesus on the Cross with the eyes of piety and true knowledge, we see Him as the "King of Glory" and not as the "King of the Jews," as the historical precision of Pontius Pilate would have wished to see Him. What

precisely is the text of the Lord's Prayer, the "Our Father"? In those Gospels which mention it, the text is not identical. Not only this, but nearly all the narrations of the Gospel are dissimilar.

However, the Church rejected every proposal to compile the four Gospels into one unified text. The Church judged that the "differences" in question do not bother her. Just as a side note, we might say that, often, the Latins (who, by their erroneous doctrines, have fashioned a different sort of man who possesses a different logic) "lose their bearings" when disputing with the Orthodox, erring along these lines: "When it pleases you, you take a word (of Scripture) in its literal sense, and when it pleases you, you take it in its mystical sense — always just the way it suits you!" They say this because they do not understand that these words have no other signification than that which the Church attributes to them.

In the *Synaxarion* [the narration which describes the significance of any given feast] of Great Friday we read the following: "The divine Fathers who have prescribed all things well... have transmitted (lit. "traditioned") unto us that we should celebrate four things..." and we ask: "Do we celebrate the feasts arbitrarily or do we celebrate them according to the Tradition?" Obviously, according to the Tradition since it says, "they have transmitted unto us" (transmission = tradition, *i.e.* in Greek, the words have the same meaning). Did they who transmitted these things do so offhandedly perhaps? No, for they are called "divine fathers". Was their Tradition right or wrong? It says, "who have prescribed all things well." Were they aware of the astronomical discrepancies that existed? Most certainly they were. Since, therefore, they were not disturbed, why then should we be disturbed?

C. "It Creates Difficulties in Our Contemporary Social Life."

Up to this present day we have never known a more commercial and business-like group than the Jewish people. Wherever one looks, one can verify with his own eyes the Jewish element's role in society: in commerce, in industry, in the sciences, in the fine arts and in politics. And we ask: Have the

Jews ever been disturbed over the fact that they use one calendar for their commercial transactions, and another for their religious observances? Further, are the Moslems disturbed over the fact that they use a solar civil calendar and a lunar religious calendar? To the contrary, they are quite tenacious as regards their religious life and their calendars.

Only we, the Orthodox Christians, are disturbed by the true Tradition of our fathers and do not even give it the same honor which the members of other religions give to their false traditions. God blessed the sons of Rechab, who, according to the command of their father, lived in their tents and drank no wine, and He offered them as examples to the Israelites (Jerem. 35). Nabuthai refused to sell his vineyard to King Ahab himself in order to render due honor to his father according to the flesh (III Kings 21), and should we lay at the pope's feet the heritage which was transmitted to us by those who have begotten us by the grace of the Gospel, and who have marked out before us the straight path leading into heaven?

No, beloved adversaries, we do not accept the appellation which you wish to impose on us, that of "Old Calendarists", since, neither has our calendar with which our Church has lived and granted us sanctification for twenty centuries "grown old", nor have we ever adopted an older calendar than that which the holy Orthodox Catholic Church of Jesus Christ has employed and does employ.

We are not "Old-Believers", nor are we "sentimentalists"; we do not worship days, nor are we attached to the past. We simply walk in the footsteps of our fathers and mothers who have begotten us in the Gospel. It would more than suffice us if we could simply attain to their stature, by the grace of Christ. With this "imprecise" calendar, St. Cosmas of Aitolia, St. Nectarios of Aegina, St. Gerasimus of Cephalonia, St. Seraphim of Sarov, St. Theoclista of Lesbos, St. Marcella of Chios, St. John of Kronstadt, and all the rest became sanctified. With this erroneous calendar, they became sanctified, shed their blood for Christ and wrought signs and wonders. But which of our fathers or mothers have at any time committed your calendar to us? This is nothing but a papal tradition, and "we do not accept the papal institutions!" For us the pope is

neither holy, nor Orthodox, nor a member of the Catholic Church of Christ. How can we follow as our shepherd someone who is a stranger and unknown to us?

But you, on the other hand, have adopted something which is new, which you did not receive, which is not in accordance with Tradition. It is just, therefore, that you are called "New Calendarists"; you take pains to please the schismatics and heretics of the West rather than your fathers, who have begotten you and your brothers. In this manner you continuously regurgitate worldly and materialistic excuses which are deprived of all spiritual and theological basis. You borrow the scholastic and rationalistic arguments of the West concerning

"adaptation to the contemporary needs of humanity," the "progress and evolution of scientific precision," but of what interest is this to the Church which is more real than all other realities?

Behold, we have shown you by the Scriptures and by the fathers why we persist in maintaining the Tradition. Give us, therefore, in return an ecclesiastical, theological and canonical argument based on the Gospel, which has constrained you to innovate. As the ancient philosophers used to say: "You will not receive anything from him who has nothing." But since you do not have even one canonical argument, you hurl yourselves upon us in a cowardly manner with violence, persecutions and calumnies.

(to be continued in the next issue)

HURRICANE ISAAC AND THE MISSION

I had word from Fr. Amboise 27 Aug. (obviously at least some electronic services are back up). Translation of the relevant parts of his e-mail:

"Christ protect us with the presence of Isaac in our country! Much difficulty communicating with Nicolas, yesterday and today, to get information about Jacmel. Last Friday he told me that several houses were destroyed, all the gardens completely destroyed. At LaPlaine, above all at St. Dorothy's, there was so much water that I had to get tools to break [part of, I assume] the wall on the east side to let the water out. The oak tree which was near the mango tree broke and put electricity out of service

in this sector of the zone. At my home, water from the streets passed through the yard and into the house. Isaac has put us in a more critical situation than was already the case.

Fr. Amboise goes on to ask for assistance in clo-
turing his property (which, if done properly, would help to protect it from future flooding). It's expensive work, but the property is not very large. Any "earmarked" contributions greatly appreciated.

The container of food has arrived in Haiti, but is still tied up in Customs. Help still needed for customs, distribution and preparation costs.

And prayers, of course!

☐ Yes... I want to pledge support for the Haitian Orthodox Mission! Please record my pledge through December 2013 for a contribution of ☐ \$200 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$50 ☐ other amount (_____) monthly, by ☐ check or ☐ MasterCard/VISA (number below). I enclose my first month's pledge for _____. (You may of course choose a dedicated use below if you wish.)

☐ Yes... I want to make a one-time contribution toward the expenses of the Haitian Orthodox Mission, in the amount of ☐ \$1000 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$100 ☐ other amount (_____), for which I enclose my ☐ check ☐ MasterCard/VISA (number below). I would like my contribution to be used for ☐ support of the church-related schools ☐ assistance for earthquake recovery ☐ transportation funds for faithful living at long distances from the church ☐ assistance for Food for Hungry Children (another container coming up!) ☐ however needed.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/ZIP: _____

Telephone: _____

MasterCard/VISA number: _____ - _____ - _____ - _____

Expiration date: ____/____

Mail or fax to:

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